DEATH VALLEY 49ers KEEPSAKE

Number 27

Death Valley

Its Impounded Americans

Ralph P. "Pete" Merritt, Jr.

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COVER: *Tom Kobayashi overlooks the south fields, Manzanar Relocation Center, 1943. A vehicle is loaded in preparation for internee relocation from Manzanar. In December of 1942, sixty five Japanese–Americans were evacuated from Manzanar and brought to Death Valley's Cow Creek, which served as "Camp Funeral Range" for the Civilian Conservation Corps.*

(COVER ILLUSTRATION BY JEAN PICKARD. PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, ANSEL ADAMS PHOTOGRAPHER)

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Death Valley

Its Impounded Americans

The Contribution by Americans of Japanese Ancestry During World War II

BY

Ralph P. "Pete" Merritt, Jr.

Illustrations by
Jean Pickard

Keepsake Number 27

Originally Published for the
38th Annual Death Valley '49ers Encampment
November 5-8, 1987
Death Valley, California

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Death Valley, California 92328

© Second Edition Printed by
The Death Valley '49ers, Inc.
November 2006

Second Edition printed by Jostens Printing and Publishing, Visalia, CA 93279

Death Valley

Its Impounded Americans

Knock! Knock! A sharp knocking on the door brought T. R. Goodwin, Superintendent of Death Valley National Monument, and his wife, Neva, out of a sound sleep. Slipping into their robes, they opened the door to find three men standing there. It was 2:00 A.M., the morning of December 10, 1942.

Knowing the Goodwins, Robert L. Brown explained that they were representing Ralph P. Merritt, Director of the War Relocation Project at Manzanar, a few miles north of Lone Pine, Inyo County, California. (Merritt was to become president of the Death Valley '49ers in 1960). Brown stated that there had been a riot at Manzanar; the military had shot some of the Japanese internees; and that a large group for their own protection must be moved away from Manzanar immediately. Did Supt. Goodwin have any place to house them on a temporary basis?

"Certainly," stated Goodwin, "the Cow Creek Civilian Conservation Corps camp has been empty since the beginning of the war, and is not proposed for use in the foreseeable future. We will get the camp in order, and you can bring your people in today."

As soon as the Manzanar representatives left, Goodwin dressed and started waking his staff, requesting that they proceed to clean up the C.C.C. barracks and mess hall.

Bob Brown and the others returned over the long road to Manzanar, bringing Director Merritt the good news, that living space for the threatened evacuees was available in Death Valley. That afternoon, a military convoy of jeeps and weapons carriers, together with staff cars, started out for the Valley. The group was composed of

65 evacuees, 10 staff members and about 12 soldiers. Each occupied vehicle had a soldier with a rifle ready. There was a truckload of hay, one of furniture, another of food. Whole families were in the group: men, women, and children, including a number of single people. The rather few people along the route were staggered by this strange sight.

The evacuees, who became known as "refugees", did not know where they were going, had nothing but what was on their backs, were leaving friends and relatives-for where?

It was a long trip, ending at their new housing about 9:30 P.M. First, the crowd must be fed, then cots and bedding distributed, and a determination of where people were to sleep. There were about 16 buildings in the camp; that first night women and children were housed in one area, men in another. Death Valley put on one of its coldest nights, and blankets were at a premium.

The next morning the men filled the ticking with hay, and the sleeping conditions improved. Fortunately, there were several excellent cooks in the crowd, who took over the mess hall, and volunteers washed the walls and floors with soap and water. The soldiers were housed in a barracks that had no flooring; however, it overlooked the access road to the Camp, a vantage point.

One building was selected for the infirmary, with shower, toilet, running water and four rooms. This became the domain of Josephine Hawes, Registered Nurse from the Manzanar Hospital, later to become chief nurse of that fine facility. Nurse Hawes was not only nurse but health officer and doctor to the group and the area, as there was no doctor within 100 or more miles.

Nurse Hawes already had two cases to care for - men who had been badly beaten at Manzanar and had been hospitalized before being moved to Cow Creek C.C.C. Camp. She took care not only of the Japanese and the staff, but also Park Service and military personnel. Once the telephones were put back in working order, (they had been out for weeks) she was able to get her orders from the medical officer at Manzanar Hospital.

Barracks space was assigned to families, bachelor quarters set up,

kitchen K.P. duties assigned, work groups cleaned the area. Life began at Cow Creek.

Why was it necessary to remove 65 persons of Japanese ancestry, virtually all citizens of the United States, from the one mile square internment camp called Manzanar, located in the Owens Valley? Let's go back in time to find some of the complex answers to this question.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order #9066. It excluded all persons of Japanese ancestry, whether American citizen or not, from the Western Defense Command, namely, California, Oregon and Washington. Roosevelt did this under great pressure from individuals and West Coast organizations, both from the viewpoint of fear, and also economic gain by the removal of the industrious Japanese. No court of law or proof of guilt was involved in this judgment. One hundred ten thousand persons, 70% of whom were American citizens, lost their income, possessions and associations, as a result of the evacuation. In the case of Manzanar, 10,000 of these were put behind a one mile square barbed wire fence, guarded 24 hours a day by military police, in the cold of winter compounded by severe dust storms, and lodged in barracks, 36 persons per barrack, without partitions between families. Resentment was a natural result.

It should be kept in mind that, by the laws of the United States, Asian-born residents were at that time denied the right of citizenship in this country. During the first year of the war in the Pacific, the Allied Forces were not winning. The press daily reminded the population of their losses. Some older Japanese, born in Japan, did not wish to gamble their future in a country that had denied them citizenship.

To compound these problems were quarrels and feuds between various factions of the Japanese Americans-basically those highly pro-American versus those who were bitter due to their treatment. The latter believed that the former were informers operating in the center, carrying stories to the administration of the camp and to the FBI.

The final straw came when the pro-American organization petition-

ed President Roosevelt to open army service to young Japanese American men. Many older people were fearful that their sons would be required to fight in the South Pacific, possibly killing relatives or being killed. Others were resentful that their young men would be required to fight for a country that had treated American citizens so badly. However, a number believed their adopted country would prevail, and encouraged their sons to volunteer for army service.

The pro-Americans took the position that, if Japanese Americans were to be accepted in the future of this country on equal terms with other citizens and earn their respect, they must go the extra mile to prove themselves loyal to their native land. These reasons, together with many injustices, confusions and misunderstandings, brought about the circumstances that created the confrontations with the military police. After dark on the evening of December 6, 1942, a mob moved towards the police station and jail to demand the release of a suspect charged with a murderous attack on a leader of the pro-American group. Military police with tear gas, machines guns, shot guns and rifles blocked their way. A demonstrator started an unoccupied truck rolling downhill towards the soldiers; one, then others, opened fire and men fell in the darkness. The mob broke up, leaving two dead and 11 injured.

During the night, gangs armed with knives and any available weapons, roamed the camp seeking individuals on a publicized death list. All their intended victims eluded their would-be assassins. The camp administration, assisted by the MPs, quickly took them and their families into protective custody. Three days later, by military convoy, they were moved to Death Valley and to the C.C.C. camp at Cow Creek, located four miles north of the present-day Visitors Center and Museum and adjacent to the Monument Headquarters at that time.

The story now continues –

During the second evening's supper, unexpected guests dropped by. Supt. T. R. Goodwin, his chief ranger, park naturalist, and Ranger Spike Oakes were introduced to the group by Albert Chamberlain, who was in charge of the camp. "We welcome you to Death Valley",

said Goodwin. "We are sorry we did not have time to prepare this camp for you in the way we wanted. Here, as you are well aware, due to wartime economy imposed by the government, we are short of men. We have only a skeleton crew to maintain a 3,000 square mile area. The men we could spare did manage to make these buildings livable. Within a short time, you've made many noticeable improvements. For instance, the floor of this mess hall was never cleaner.

"Death Valley is rich in human and scientific interest. This region has a wealth of color, blended by nature into a constantly changing pattern. From here you have noted the pastels of the barren rocks, the browns and purples of the mountain ranges, the white expanses of salt and alkali west of the camp.

"When you get settled down in your new home, we would like to show you slides of wildlife and flora, in the evenings. Our naturalist will be happy to speak about his findings and studies. Our rangers will also be on hand to tell you of the various aspects of life in the Monument, and brief you on the history of the region. We have all around us a vast, natural museum.

"Boredom will set in as you run out of things to do. We have on the northwest perimeter of this camp a large fresh water swimming pool, which you are welcome to use. We want you to enjoy your stay here. All of us of the National Monument are your friends and we are always ready to help you."

Tad Uyeno, pre-war newspaper columnist for the Los Angeles Japanese Daily News, commented in his post-war press articles "Point of No Return": "Supt. Goodwin's welcoming talk to us impressed us. We had expected local hostility to our presence in Death Valley. We had come to expect many white Americans to be prejudiced against us. We were exposed too long to prejudices and discriminations by certain white citizens not to form an immediate opinion about them until they have proven themselves to be friendly and sincere, and they bore no hatred against us.

"Somehow, T. R. Goodwin created in our minds a very favorable

impression from our first meeting. He was, we believed, a man we could trust and depend on for help should we need it.

"As a spokesman for the Park Service, Goodwin expressed his feelings and we felt that his concept of democracy applied equally to all Americans regardless of race, color, or creed. We accepted him as a friend wholeheartedly and we passed on this blanket acceptance to include all the men serving under him."

SOLDIERS

The role of the soldier MPs at Cow Creek was very different from that at Manzanar. At Manzanar, soldiers manned guard towers which surrounded the camp area, armed with rifles and machine guns. The soldiers lived in quarters about 1/4 mile to the south of camp. They had no relationship with the Japanese evacuees and only upon two occasions, first, the riot period during which they patrolled within Manzanar, and second, when the soldiers joined with the evacuees at the memorial service for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, were the soldiers inside the barbed wire fence.

It was different at Cow Creek. There were no guard towers or sentries walking guard duty. The soldiers shared the showers and latrines with the evacuees, ate at the same time as the staff and evacuees in the mess hall, and a friendly relationship existed. In fact, Camp Director Chamberlain, who also supervised the soldiers, informed the mess hall gathering that to the outside visitors such as the press, it would not look well if the soldiers were found intermingled with the Japanese at meals, and requested that from then on, the soldiers should eat at one table reserved for them.

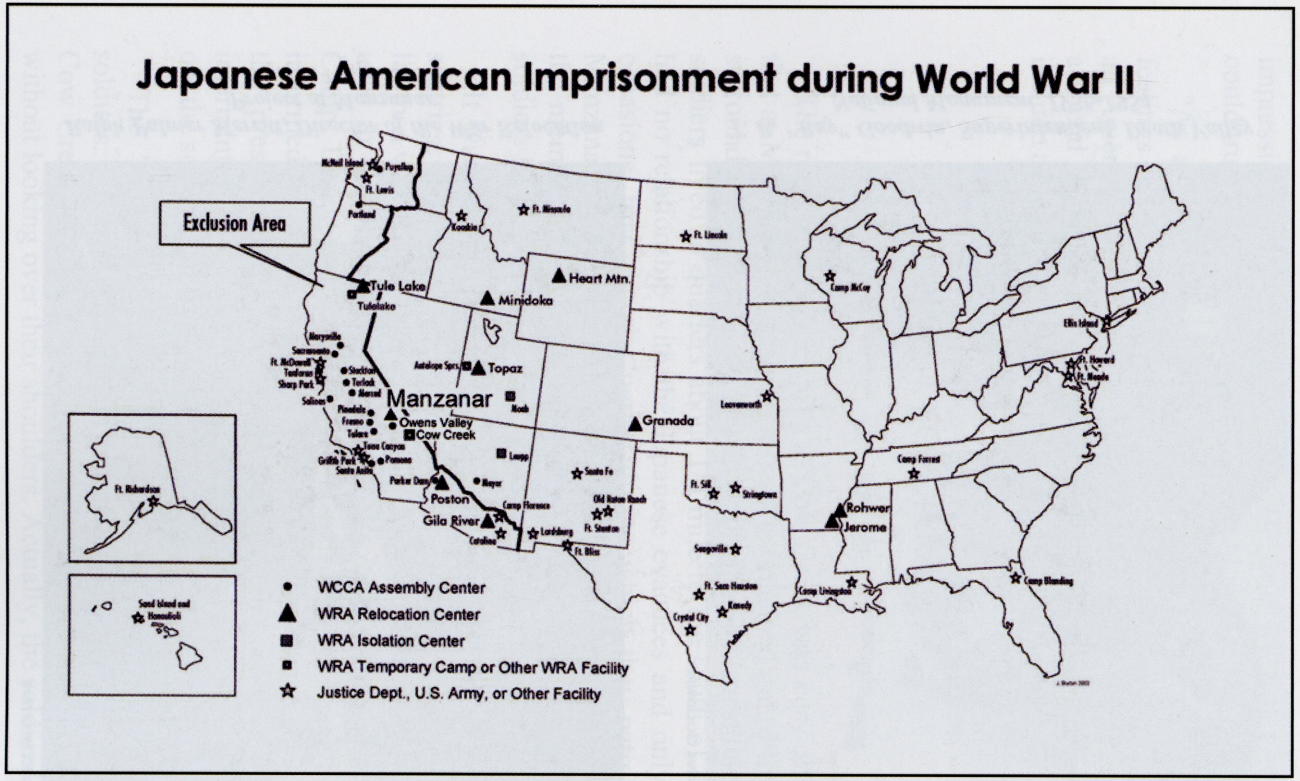
The "refugees" recall there was a good relationship with the soldiers. Manzanar fences and guard towers were gone; the peace of Cow Creek remained. After months of harassment, they could walk without looking over their shoulders. Actually, the soldiers' job was to

-Photo by Toyo Miyataki

Ralph Palmer Merritt, Director of the War Relocation Project at Manzanar.

-Courtesy Neva Goodwin

T. R. "Ray" Goodwin, Superintendent, Death Valley National Monument, 1936-1954

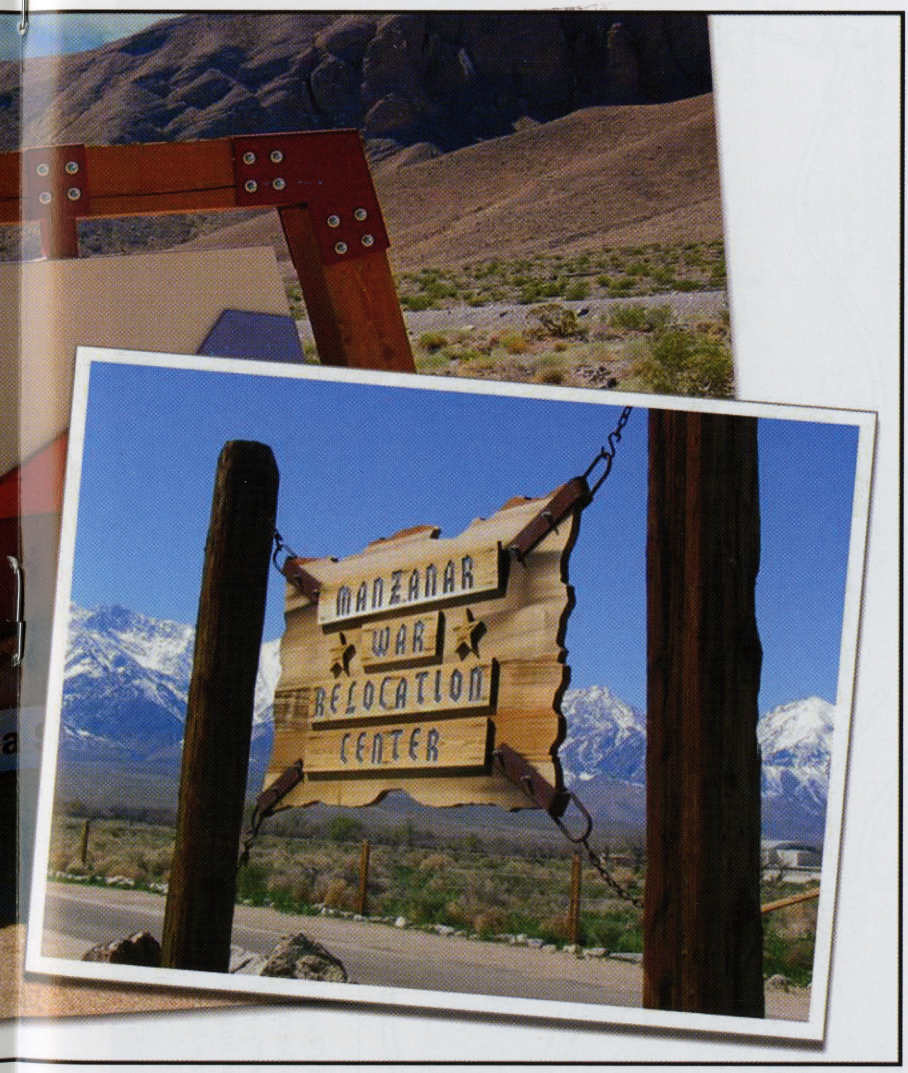


U.S. Executive Order 9066, issued by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, authorized U.S. armed forces commanders to declare areas of the United States as military areas "from which any or all persons with 'Foreign Enemy Ancestry' may be excluded." This order led to the internment of some 120,000 Japanese-Americans for the duration of the war. (Map courtesy of www.rabbit-in-the-moon.org)

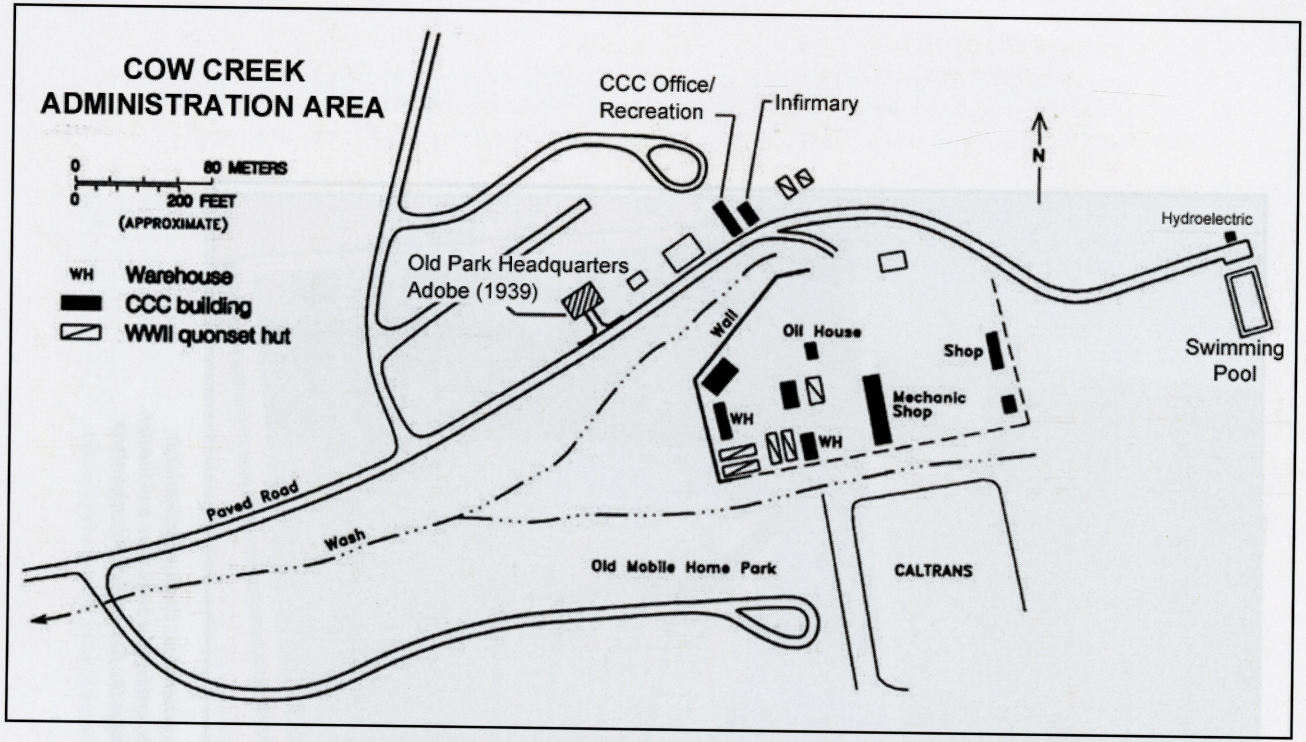
—Ansel Adams

The War Relocation Center at Manzanar in Owens Valley, circa 1943. It was from here that 65 evacuees were transferred to Death Valley. **(Courtesy of the Trustees of the Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust. All Rights Reserved.)**

Today, the 814 acre Manzanar National Historic Site preserves the his
auto tours and an 8000 square foot Interpretive Center housing histor
Once known as the Funeral Range Civilian Conservation Corps camp
Adobe, built in 1939. (photos from artist's collection)



istory of Manzanar for this and future generations through self-guided
ric photographs, audiovisual programs, artifacts, a book store and theater.
p, Death Valley's Cow Creek still includes the former Park Headquarters



When the WRA (War Relocation Authority) moved the 65 evacuees from Manzanar to Death Valley, the Cow Creek camp and the adjacent park headquarters and utility yard included about 35 buildings. The WRA had use of six barracks, a mess hall, library, infirmary, and a cottage for a staff member, his wife, and a nurse. The relocated evacuees cleaned and repaired the buildings and a swimming pool was prepared for use. Ten of the thirty five buildings present in the 1940s still remain in the surrounding area. (Map courtesy of the National Park Service)

The Civilian Conservation Corps Camp at Cow Creek as it appeared in the latter 1930's.
Here the evacuees from Manzanar were billeted in Death Valley for 2 1/2 months during World War II.

Actual photographs of the Japanese-Americans while in Death Valley during World War II are extremely scarce, perhaps non-existant—with the exception of the two seen here. Above shows the infirmary at Cow Creek; persons on steps are not identified. At bottom are Ned Morioka and cousin Harry (no last name available) riding their lady friends in their "chariots." —AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

keep the curious and the vindictive away from the camp, which sometimes happened. One soldier stated that they did not know how many evacuees were in the camp; that was the staff responsibility-they were there to protect those in camp. This was a total reversal of their duties in Manzanar. Friendships lasting over the years were formed between guard and guarded at Cow Creek.

Mrs. T. R. (Neva) Goodwin tells an interesting story. She mentioned to one of the fine Japanese chefs that she had never mastered the art of cooking rice. The Japanese, staff and soldiers were most fortunate to have included in their "refugee" group at Cow Creek highly experienced cooks. One man had owned four restaurants in Los Angeles prior to the evacuation. He volunteered to teach Neva, came to her home, and did just that. Her rice cooking is still excellent today, and she is most proud of it.

WORK

One evening at dinner, Camp Director Chamberlain presented a thought to the group. In view of the lack of Park Service manpower, work projects were getting ahead of the staff. Considering the exceptionally fine treatment that the Japanese had received, together with the need to combat boredom during confinement, would the evacuees be willing to give the rangers a hand by volunteering to do maintenance work?

The men agreed, and the next morning walked up to the Park Headquarters to present themselves as ready and willing to start working. The rangers were taken by surprise, but said they could certainly use help. "Then, let's get started," said the evacuees. They were assigned to Ranger Spike Oakes for work detail. Oakes started them out on sign painting. Then, as the days went by, cleaning out springs, building dams, digging ditches, mixing cement, putting up radio antennas and many odd jobs were accomplished. No provision was

made for pay or even gloves, and none was requested. Work continued daily, including New Year's Day.

The wear and tear on hands, knees, back and clothing was quite noticeable. These men, prior to evacuation to Manzanar, had been business and professional people. Gloves were non-existent, blisters and sore backs came readily; however, there were no complaints.

TRAVELS

During their travels around Death Valley on various jobs, Ranger Oakes saw to it that the evacuees would get educational benefits as well as completing the needed work. Oakes made the men work hard, but he always set the pace. The crews, when time permitted, were taken to many points of interest in the valley, which they called "fringe benefits", and for which they were most appreciative.

Some thirty years later, in 1973 the Cow Creek "refugees" held a reunion in Los Angeles. Ranger Spike Oakes, who had completed his many years with the Park Service as superintendent of Tonto National Monument in Arizona, retiring at 6o years of age, had moved to Tucson, Arizona. The ex-"refugees" were most happy to find him; and although suffering from serious emphysema, he made the trip to Los Angeles to discover that he was the guest of honor. There was mutual respect and affection between the Japanese Americans from Cow Creek and Ranger Spike Oakes.

On occasions when the rangers or the soldiers made trips to Beatty, Nevada or Death Valley Junction, California for supplies or mail, they usually took a group of evacuees with them. Reception by the residents of these towns was open and non-critical; they had heard good reports from the Monument residents about the Japanese and received them well. One day the soldiers in two army trucks took the women of the camp to Dante's View overlooking the Valley. It was an exciting day! The ladies had been cooped up for one month in camp. There were 32 females including youngsters.

BURRO

The camp mess hall was supplied by truck from Manzanar. At one point, provisions were quite late and the meat supply was exhausted. Supt. Goodwin solved that problem. Even in 1943 the burro population was creating food shortages for the bighorn sheep and other animals. Goodwin sent Ranger Oakes accompanied by soldiers to Wildrose Canyon on a hunting expedition. The group returned with two burros; one was taken to the Indian Village and the other to the C.C.C. mess hall, where it was butchered. The chefs told the evacuees, staff and soldiers "those that will eat burro-this side of the mess hall; those that won't-the other side."

Tad Uyeno writes, "Now that we had tasted burro, we could expect other delicacies found in the desert; scorpion cocktail, pickled creosote buds, gila monster a la king, mesquite beans, fishhook cactus and braised burro tongue. We did not dare suggest this menu to our chefs, as they would send us out to gather ingredients for the above."

In the first few weeks at Cow Creek, the evacuees had numerous jobs getting their new housing and grounds in order. Ruth Kurata Yamazaki in her story "Death Valley Daze" recalls:

"One of the projects of the carpenter crew was to erect a partition in the shower room, which was just one long open building, with shower heads on each wall. The former occupants of the camp had all been young men, so there had been no need of any partition.

"At first, the men and women were assigned different hours for showers. We all approved the idea of a partition, dividing the shower room into halves. However, we found that the work of our amateur carpenters left much to be desired. For the partition, they tore off interior plywood panels from the unoccupied buildings. They completely overlooked (or ignored) the big nail holes in the plywood.

"Before long, the women realized with a shock that they were being observed through the holes. There was a lot of feverish activity as the

holes were filled with putty. We felt temporarily free from prying eyes, but what was going to keep the curious from poking the putty out the holes? We always made a careful inspection for holes before we took our showers.

"After the priority projects were out of the way, the carpenter crew dreamed up one of their own. They built a Las Vegas type crap table, an accurate replica. The table was installed in the bachelor men's quarters and soon that place became a popular hangout for the gamblers in the crowd.

"There was a swimming pool at the C.C.C. camp. The older children spent much of their time there. It was a great treat-being able to go swimming every day in the dead of winter.

"There was a variety of activities going on in the evenings. However, since I was on the dishwashing crew, and had to put the children to bed, I didn't have too much time to participate before lights out at 10:00 P.M.

"The only time we got a break was when one of the children was in the infirmary, then the lights were left on all night as Miss Hawes, our registered nurse, spent the night with the sick child in case of complications. We really took advantage of the lights and played poker most of the night."

The rangers suggested to Camp Director Chamberlain that a Christmas Eve party for all be held at the C.C.C. camp. All residents heartily agreed that it was a wonderful gesture on the part of the rangers.

Josephine Hawes, R.N., writes: "It was the day before Christmas. Everyone in camp was trying to be gay and happy, and yet everyone had a strange feeling about the day. The white sands of the salt beds

glistened in the sunlight. The sun was warm, the sky blue. It was Christmas time, yet no one could believe it. No family reunions. No savory smell of turkey. But in the mess hall was a Christmas tree bedecked with trimmings. There are no trees in Death Valley. This tree was lying on the side of the road when the caravan left Manzanar. Our recreational director, Aksel Nielsen, saw it and stopped the convoy and tossed it onto one of the trucks. It was like a gift from heaven. Some of the Japanese had made decorations, then the Park Service people brought some of their own trimmings. Our first evacuee to leave camp for the East sent a beautiful blue star for the top of the tree. It was to be the most thankful Christmas they knew, for did not they have life, and freedom from fear?"

Genevieve Oakes, widow of Ranger Oakes, tells that everyone was invited, Park Service, Furnace Creek employees, Indian families, with many bringing gifts. It was a grand party.

On Christmas day, everyone donned their Sunday best, and assembled in the mess hall. Josephine Hawes continues: "then Santa Claus arrived with a large pack. He was a real Santa. Where they got the suit, I never found out. Out of his bag came many packages. Around the tree were more. Several nights before, a truck from Pasadena arrived with many gifts. The girls unwrapped each one to examine the gift, then rewrapped them and assigned a name. The refugees were very generous people. They themselves had wrapped two packages, one of cigarettes and one of razor blades, for each of the nine army guards. So people all over the United States had sent the Christmas spirit of good will."

Tad Uyeno recalls that special day: "On this fleeting day the internees silently prayed for peace, a hope for love and a pledge for better understanding. Whether one was Christian, Buddhist or Jewish, one celebrated Christ's birth as a momentous occasion and the day held a special significance. No one questioned the other person's religious faith, and the Buddhists Joined the Christians in the observance of Christmas. The lone Jew in the camp, a soldier, also participated."

Togo Tanaka, an English editor of the L.A. Japanese *Daily News*

before the war, later to become a highly respected community leader and businessman in Los Angeles, and his wife, Jean, with their one year old daughter, were "refugees" at Cow Creek. Quoting Mr. Tanaka: "Jean and I had a family prayer at Death Valley. In the still of the desert night, with the stars so close, we recited it often. We have remembered it through the years. It seemed so appropriate for us at Cow Creek in the vastness of that desert area.

"Lord, behold our family and dear friends here assembled. We thank thee for the love that binds us, for this our temporary home, for our food, our good health, and especially for the blue skies that brighten our days. And for our friends around the earth. In these troubled times, give us grace and strength to persevere. And bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavors. And if it may not be so, give us the courage to encounter that which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune, down to the gates of death, loyal and loving to one another. We ask this in Thy name, amen."

MODEL TRAINS & SAILING BOATS

Superintendent Goodwin delighted in his hobby of building model trains and sailing boats. He had built a large room onto his home to house the collection. One evening, he and Mrs. Goodwin invited the evacuees to their home to see the trains. He had constructed a model of mountains, plains, farms and a city. The locomotives puffed steam, whistled, pulling freight or passenger cars, and were scale models of famous engines.

The evacuees were enthralled with the exhibit, and concluded that his room was actually a museum, large enough for all to view the trains. Supt. Goodwin proved sincere in his statement that "all of us in the Park Service are your friends and are always ready to help." Mrs. Neva Goodwin tells of her husband sailing his model boats in the swimming pool. "He took our two children, together with evacuee children on Saturdays to try out the boats."

That brings to mind the story that Mary Thorndike, school teacher of Death Valley schools for ten years at Furnace Creek, tells of the visit to her school by the evacuee children. One boy said, immediately upon arrival at the school, "You don't have your flag up." Mrs. Thorndike explained to him that the rope had broken the previous day, and no one had been available to fix it. The boy was plainly upset that the flag was not flying and continued to be during his visit to the school.

LEAVING

So the weeks went by. The volunteer work crews continued to assist the Park Service. The ladies took care of the housekeeping, which demanded daily attention. In addition to caring for the children and assisting in the kitchen, they shared the long hours of the days through conversation. There were few books available to read.

Immediately following the evacuees' removal from Manzanar, the government commenced efforts to find homes and jobs outside the Western Defense Command for them. As openings became available, departing evacuees were escorted east to Las Vegas, the closest railhead. Escorts were required while evacuees were within California.

An organization which played a major role in obtaining jobs and homes for the evacuees was the American Friends Service Committee (the Quakers). Representatives of that fine organization came to Cow Creek and interviewed the evacuees. Jobs and housing were provided in Chicago. The American Friends had opened a hostel in Chicago, not only for refugees from the ten relocation centers of the West, but also for refugees from Europe.

And so the two and one-half months of "refugee" life at Cow Creek C.C.C. camp in Death Valley came to a close. Some Japanese Americans, who lived through that period, remember it in a positive manner. Some quotes are: "We remember the beauty of Cow Creek

following the jail of Manzanar"; "people were relieved to be at Cow Creek, with no threat to their lives"; "We began to see daylight and hope for the future"; "We had an opportunity at Cow Creek to get adjusted to the outside world, to get our feet on the ground."

In a recent letter to the author of this Keepsake, Togo Tanaka, previously quoted, said:

"What Ralph Merritt did, with speed and dispatch, in getting his friend Goodwin to respond, after the violence and bloodshed at Manzanar, showed us the light at the end of the tunnel. Your father saved lives and sent us on our way to rebuild our faith in our native land. What greater legacy could any American leave? I think those of us who tried to lead exemplary lives as good citizens have felt in our own way an obligation to repay the trust freely bestowed by the Ralph Merritts."

Tad Uyeno wrote at the close of his articles:

"This story began on December 6, 1942 in Manzanar and ended February 15, 1943 in Death Valley.

"When we left Death Valley, we left behind no monuments. Posterity will not remember us for the work we did for Death Valley National Monument.

"However insignificant was our contribution to the development of the existing facilities in the Monument, we who lived there-65 Americans of Japanese ancestry-deserve a footnote to a page in the history of that region."

And so it shall be.

SINCERE APPRECIATION

to the following contributors:

Togo and Jean Tanaka
Tad Uyeno, columnist and author of "Point of No Return"
Mrs. Tom (Jane) Tayama
Ruth Kurata Yamazaki, "Death Valley Daze"
Shiro and Mary Nomura, Eastern California Museum, Independence, Calif.
Miss L. Josephine Hawes, R.N.
Mrs. T. R. (Neva) Goodwin
Mrs. Aksel (Melva) Nielson
Mrs. Spike (Genevieve) Oakes
Mrs. John (Mary) Thorndike
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Barlow, University of Arizona, Tucson
Matt Ryan, retired Ranger and Park Superintendent, National Park Service
Patricia L. Merritt, morale booster, chief assistant and critic

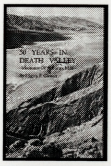
RESOURCE MATERIAL:

UCLA Library, Special Collections, Los Angeles
Eastern California Museum, Independence, CA
Personal papers, Ralph P. Merritt
Uprooted Americans, Dillon S. Myer, Director, War Relocation Authority, Washington, D.C.
*Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division
*National Park Service Website, www.nps.gov

* 2006 Reprint

The Death Valley '49ers

Books



50 Years In Death Valley, Memoirs of a Borax Man by Harry P. Gower
Death Valley '49ers publication # 09 **164 pages in Soft Cover**

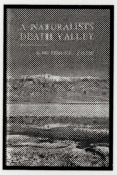
"A collection of reminiscence and anecdotes of the Death Valley area between 1909 and 1960. Mr. H. P. (Harry) Gower was not only a resident but had a major influence on the course of events in the region during those years." - *Dean Lemon, Life Director, The Death Valley '49ers*

"Harry P. Gower was not just a spectator but often a prime mover in events in Death Valley. Surveying for railroads, routing claim jumpers, and managing a pioneer resort hotel."
- L. Burr Belden, Past President, The Death Valley '49ers

The Lost Death Valley '49er Journal of Louis Nusbaumer by George Koenig
Death Valley '49ers publication # 11 **84 pages in Soft Cover**

Louis Nusbaumer (1819-1878), was a German immigrant that left New York City in March, 1849, traveled to Independence, Mo., and there began his trip overland with William Lewis Manly and John Rogers to California.

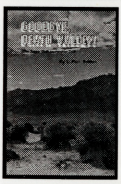
This is the story of his journey, which was kept in two small notebooks, recovered in 1966, illustrated throughout with drawings, photos and maps. Made available here by the Death Valley '49ers Organization.



A Naturalist's Death Valley by Dr. Edmund C. Jaeger
Death Valley '49ers publication # 05 76 pages in Soft Cover

A Naturalist's Death Valley is a primer to help the thousands of admiring visitors to Death Valley National Park get a general picture of wild flowers, trees, shrubs, reptiles, birds, insects, mammals, fossils and Native Americans.

Dr. Edmund C. Jaeger was a nationally known naturalist who authored many books on the flora & fauna of California.

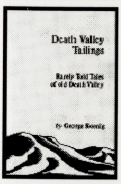


Goodbye, Death Valley! The Tragic 1849 Jayhawker Trek by L. Burr Belden
Death Valley '49ers publication # 04 **68 pages in Soft Cover**

This work traces the largest of several parties who became mired in Death Valley during December 1849. Two members of this party, Jayhawkers, kept diaries of their trip which have been preserved.

They were consulted by the author along with a scrapbook and numerous letters kept by the Huntington Library in San Marino, California.

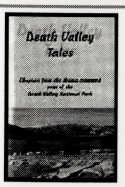
This work also includes a list of Jayhawkers.



Death Valley Tailings Rarely Told Tales of old Death Valley by George Koenig
Death Valley '49ers publication # 13 132 pages in Soft Cover & 144 pages First Edition Hard Cover

Recaptured within these pages are stories that will help you to turn back the clock, and relive the historic past. This is a definitely different collection of Death Valley tales. Each provides a more complete picture of one of the most fascinating areas and eras of the Old West.

Subjects discussed include missing 1849 Death Valley Argonauts, gold and silver hunters, explores, map makers, and inscriptions left on rock.

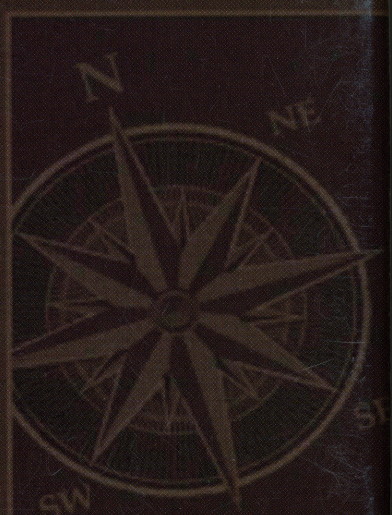


Death Valley Tales, chapters from the drama-crammed past of the Death Valley National Park by Ten Western Authors
Death Valley '49ers publication # 03 **74 pages in Soft Cover**

This publication has been in print since 1955, but in this newly updated edition all the stories are true.

Mrs. Juliette Brier's account of her trek through the desert in 1849-50 and Russ Journigan's remembrances from the 1930s and 1940s are a wonderful addition, along with John Rogers Death Valley's Unsung Hero in 1849.

Orders may be placed
by visiting or website
at
www.DeathValley49ers.org



WCCA Assembly Center
WRA Relocation Center
WRA Isolation Center
WRA Temporary Camp
Justice Dept., U.S. Army